2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

trees above, pitiful reminders of a once-proud forest. A hurried mountain stream called Dragalevtsy River passes through the village and, in doing so, turns the grist mills and assists with the washing of clothes.

A mile to the east of Dragalevtsy is Simeonovo, a settlement decidedly run-down at the heel. It was here that I spent a busy morning trying to explain to two villagers that the earth was really global rather than flat. Farther on around the shoulder of the mountain is Bistritsa, where the people are said to sing as they dance the *horo:*

> "There is no city more populous than Sofia,
> There is no river more majestic than the Iskar,
> There is no mountain more lofty than Vitosha."

This is an accurate illustration of ethnocentrism, or the belief prevalent among most people that they, and they alone, are the center of the universe and God's chosen children.

My usual approach to the village was across the unfenced fields and up the mountainside. Sometimes I came along the dull road from Sofia. By either way, the great mountain, changing color from hour to hour, was a rest to the eyes. The way across the fields led one gently into the village through patches of vegetable gardens and clumps of overhanging fruit trees. Upon entering the village from the direction of Sofia I passed the cemetery and then was closed in between whitewashed walls which lined the curving streets. Animals also felt much at home in these streets. Just before sunset the village goatherd headed the two hundred animals in his care toward the settlement. Into Renaissance Square they trotted, a capering mass of gray, black, and white. At each street several goats detached themselves from the rest to run unguided into their respective dwellings. The same scene occurred when the pigs came squealing home. At other times of day peasant girls passed by carrying washing to be pounded on rocks and dipped into the icy water of Dragalevtsy River. Hikers, many of them, lounged around Bai Penko's, or tramped through the streets obviously amused at the manners of the peasants.

Few things were as dependent upon the weather as the state of the village streets: muddy beyond description in the autumn and spring,

669 Bulgaria and keep them in readiness for an eventual military invasion of their native country. It is this latent danger which incited the neighbouring Balkan States to make such persistent efforts at Sofia for the dissolution of the Macedonian organisation. The removal of this ever present peril of war through the sudden incursion of Macedonian bands in Yugoslav, or Greek territory, has vastly increased the chances of a Bulgaro-Yugoslav rapprochement and promoted the work of pacification in the Balkans. Even if the Gheorghiev Cabinet had left no other record of its activities than this suppression of the Macedonian organisation, this would be sufficient for it to have secured a valid claim to the gratitude of all peace loving men and of the Bulgarian people above all. For the activities of the revolutionaries made themselves felt in Bulgaria far more than abroad, frequent murders, blackmailing, terrorism, flouting of justice, disregard for the prestige of the State's authority by the adherents of the revolutionary organisation, rendered its survival in Bulgaria a public danger and a factor of demoralisation, since the crimes and abuses its votaries committed were but very rarely punished.

631 663 Another laudable reform was the reduction of the administrative districts from sixteen to seven, while the rural communes, numbering 2552, were reduced to 800 approximately. This change will not only effect a diminution in the administrative staff and an economy in expenditure, estimated at between 80 to 100 million leva annually, but will also permit of a more rational economic organisation of the country. By regrouping the rural communes and lessening their numbers, more resources will be available for the communal autorities to carry on their work with more effectively. The perpetual feuds between villages over the possession of communal lands over which so much treasure and time was spent have ceased as if by

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NEW BROOMS SWEEP CLEAN

enchantement, since by this reform rival villages have been incorporated in the same commune. These rivalries were encouraged and promoted by the politicians who hitherto made themselves indispensable to the villagers as intercessors with the authorities in their judicial disputes, and constituted a large source of revenue for all political partisans to the detriment naturally of the rural population. Communes henceforth are to have a population of at least 5000 and they will be governed by mayors appointed by the central government, on whom all authority will devolve. Mayors will choose their advisers from amongst the local notables, teachers and priests. The Government has decided to appoint as mayors, men with a university training in law, active and capable who by their example and by their knowledge will be able to raise the cultural level of the villages. They will be empowered to settle all disputes involving sums less than 2,000 leva among the villagers, thus expediting the course of Justice and settling quarrels rapidly. The perpetual drain of intellectual forces from the country to the towns, which had tended to deplete the rural districts of most intelligent forces, and which accounts for their relative backwardness, has now been fortunately reversed and one may hope for a certain improvement in rural conditions as a consequence of this reform.

This administrative reform had been advocated by many social thinkers but never carried out, for it did not suit the political parties to curtail official posts and functions in which they could accommodate their partisans. M. A. Yaranov in his „Bulgaria to-day and to-morrow," a book published in 1928, recommended for instance the suppression of at least four administrative districts, as likely to secure an economy of some 100 million leva per annum and to render 550 government posts superfluous. Even the Radical party had advocated similar curtailments, but

631 663 no government had ever decided to apply such a programme of retrenchment voluntarily and deprive itself of the privilege which the dispensation of posts brought to it. For it must not be forgotten that the politicians held the electorate by the hope of office and the civil service by fear of dismissal from their posts.

645 663 Another administrative reform was a decrease in the number of Ministries. That of railways, posts and telegraphs, has been merged with that of Public Works into a Ministry of Communications, while those of Agriculture, and of Commerce and Industry have been fused into the Ministry of National Economy. This change will not only effect an economy in the personnel, but will obviate the necessity of duplicating similar work and services and generally simplify and expedite the work of the institutes. While the placing of the Ministries of Industry and Agriculture under the same management will greatly facilitate the work of reconciling rival and often contradictory policies, which hitherto prevented the adoption of a rational general plan. Cuts and economies were effected in all branches of the administrations, the Ministers themselves setting the example by reducing their salaries by 50 %, an example which was followed by managers of both State and private banks and other institutions.

663 475 316 On July 12, 1934 less, than two months from his assuming power, M. Kimon Gheorghiev announced in a public speech that his government had licensed 6220 public functionaries and effected economies in the budget amounting to a minimum of 385 million leva. The efficiency with which the work of overhauling the functioning of the administration was carried out may be gauged by the report on the management of the Pernik coal mine, which is an autonomous institution under State control. The new directors found that the former Agrarian Minister Ghitsev, under whose province came the supervising of